

Date of Hearing: April 15, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Buffy Wicks, Chair

AB 1587 (Ta) – As Amended March 18, 2026

Policy Committee: Business and Professions Vote: 19 - 0

Urgency: No State Mandated Local Program: No Reimbursable: No

**SUMMARY:**

This bill provides that a pharmacist dispensing an emergency refill of a medication without the prescriber's authorization must inform the patient's prescriber of the refill within a reasonable period only if a prescriber is identified.

**FISCAL EFFECT:**

Absorbable cost of \$800 to the Department of Consumer Affairs, to add new enforcement codes to the online licensing and enforcement system (Pharmacy Board Contingent Fund, Professions and Vocations Fund).

**COMMENTS:**

1) **Purpose.** According to the author:

Delays in care should not place patients in a position where they need to ration life-saving medication as they seek continued care. [This bill] ensures that patients who undergo a transition between doctors or insurance coverage can have a previously established prescription refilled by the pharmacist. This bill will buy precious time for patients whose lives rely on this medication.

2) **Background.** The Pharmacy Law generally prohibits a pharmacist from refilling a prescription except upon authorization of the prescriber. This authorization may be given orally or at the time of the original prescription. If no refills were authorized when the prescription was written, the patient, or the pharmacist on behalf of the patient, may requested a refill.

However, the Pharmacy Law provides for a prescription to be refilled by a pharmacist if the prescriber is unavailable to authorize the refill and if, in the pharmacist's professional judgment, failure to refill the prescription could result in harm to the patient. A pharmacist is required to make efforts to contact the patient's prescriber and make specified disclosures to the patient. This bill adds clarity to the current emergency refill authority by providing that a pharmacist is required to inform the prescriber of any refills dispensed only if a prescriber is identified.

The author argues that many vulnerable patients, especially those experiencing homelessness,

can lose access to their physician and have difficulty finding a new one, often due to network limitations and a paucity of providers in the Medi-Cal program. This bill is intended to ensure that a patient who does not currently have a prescriber is still able to have their urgently needed medications refilled by a pharmacist.

**Analysis Prepared by:** Allegra Kim / APPR. / (916) 319-2081